



TRYING TO SCORE



INTERVIEW BY JOSHUA GLAZER * PHOTOGRAPH BY JENNIFER BECKER

BRIAN REITZELL IS IGNORING THE PRICELESS

Trident mixing board behind him (rumored to have been the actual board used on "Bohemian Rhapsody") that takes up most of the space in the Bomb Factory recording studio, in favor of playing me tracks off of a PowerBook running through some medium-weight speakers. The first song is the centerpiece of Sofia Coppola's new film, *Marie Antoinette*, a remix of Bow Wow Wow's new wave classic "I Want Candy" by none other than Kevin Shields.

As music supervisor for all three of Ms. Coppola's feature films—also including 1999's *Virgin Suicides* and the Oscar winning *Lost in Translation* (2001)—Reitzell might be best known as the man who was actually able to coax new music out of the ever-reclusive My Bloody Valentine frontman. But as he switches to the Siouxsie and the Banshees classic "Hong Kong Garden"—with the original oriental bell opening replaced by 17th-century French instruments, recorded especially for Coppola's tale of the 14-year-old queen—it becomes apparent that Reitzell has musical muscle beyond an impressive cache of enigmatic friends.

"I don't think many music supervisors record scores, compose and... are musical," explains Reitzell of his unique talent within the film world, "They're like lawyers or somebody's friend or something."

Perhaps that's why Reitzell (who played drums in '80s indie-rock band Redd Cross for nine years and now frequently plays with Air) has been responsible for a majority of the significant soundtracks in recent years. Beyond the Coppola partnership, there is brother Roman's *CQ*, and the football feature *Friday Night Lights*, which ingeniously used all original music by post-rock band Explosions in the Sky. There's also *Thumbsucker*—intended to be Elliott Smith's equivalent of Simon and Garfunkel's *The Graduate* soundtrack, before tragedy struck.

"I kind of resigned myself a bit once [Smith's suicide] happened and let Tim [DeLaughter, of Polyphonic Spree] take over," he emotionally reveals about the sadly truncated soundtrack. "But yeah, Elliott's stuff... I mean, 'Trouble'—that was the last thing he ever recorded, which he did for our movie."

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/ Brian Reitzell

Marie Antoinette is set to be the biggest release of both Reitzell's and Coppola's careers. A looming deadline (as in, a month ago) has him stressed about finishing the double-disc soundtrack in time. Working with the team from Rhino Records on the mastering, Reitzell will assure that the sonic character of the music will be consistent throughout—despite songs being recorded from the '80s (The Cure, New Order), the '90s (Aphex Twin) and now (Air).

Some have commented that Reitzell's musical selection for *Marie Antoinette* is markedly similar to his other Coppola films, perhaps showing a lack of depth. He confesses that his three films for her were conceived as being something of a trilogy, but he also heavily researched 17th-century instruments for this project, including traditional harpsichord music, but recorded as a treated piano so as to be similar to some of Aphex Twin's more contemplative work. Elsewhere, the rhythm of a period chamber piece perfectly matches Bow Wow Wow's tribal toms. (And you thought you put a lot of effort into your mixtapes.)

"We're just pleasing ourselves. We're selfish," he jokes, "and getting Kevin to do it, I thought was kind of cool because I got to work with Kevin on the last film and I liked the idea that there's a thread in the three movies."

There's also the extra satisfaction of knowing that film is the perfect vehicle to expose the teeming masses to some sounds they might never have heard otherwise. One wonders how many folks got their first-ever exposure to cult heroes The Jesus and Mary Chain through the infamous use of their song "Just Like Honey" in *Lost in Translation*. The down side, Reitzell admits, is that music in movies can sometimes ruin it for those already in the know.

"I can't think of 'Just Like Honey' without thinking of that scene in *Lost in Translation*; it killed it for me, not to mention what it does for other people," he confesses. "Luckily, I think that's a beautiful scene in a beautiful movie so it's worth that kind of sacrifice, but dude, *Psychocandy* is one of my favorite records ever made and, I guess I'm happier I got to use it like that than somebody else." ☺☺

The man behind Sofia Coppola's cinema music renaissance, Brian Reitzell keeps the sounds on track